

2005 White House  
Conference on Aging

**Post-Event Summary Report**

**Name of Event:** Nassau County White House Conference Independent Aging Event

**Date of Event:** June 15, 2005

**Location of Event:** Hofstra University, Uniondale, New York  
(Include city and state)

**Number of Persons attending:** 300

**Sponsoring Organization(s):** Nassau County Department of Senior Citizen Affairs (DSCA)

**Contact Name:** Shirley Chefetz

**Telephone Number:** 516-227-8955 **Email:** ShirleyChefetz@hhsnassaucountyny.us

Please follow this format for each priority area, with the most important listed first. **Please ensure that your organization's name and contact information is provided at the bottom of each page submitted.**

**Priority issue #1:** (describe specific issue)

Caregiver Education, Skill-building and Support Program – Intervention is proposed through a psycho-educational group for caregivers of older adults with anxiety and mood disorders that will address their need for support and education to deal effectively with the challenges related o their caregiving. Additionally the proposed intervention will be done in collaboration with community-based agencies to promote partnerships and information exchange .The evaluation component of this intervention has potential for the development of best practices to family caregivers.

**Barriers:** ((list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

Family caregivers of people with mental illness not only face the demands of their caregiving, but also face the challenges associated with the illness as well as the inadequacies of the mental health system. Service providers need to support caregivers in providing them with the knowledge and skills to be successful in the caregiving role.

Anxiety and mood disorders account for the biggest proportion of mental health problems among older adults and are likely to co-occur with chronic health conditions. These problems are under-recognized and under-treated among this age group.

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**Proposed Solution(s):** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

A psycho-educational group intervention that is targeted at family caregivers of older adults with anxiety and mood disorders is proposed. To qualify, the participant must be a primary caregiver of an older adult with anxiety and/or mood disorders and be able and willing to participate in a group process over a ten week period. Recruitment of participants will take place at various community-based mental health agencies, social service agencies, and medical provider offices. As such, this intervention will require the collaborative efforts of various service providers in Nassau County.

Specific topics to be addressed may include information on anxiety and mood disorders, including its nature, course, symptoms, treatment, as well as topics on stress management, problem solving, and accessing community resources. Additionally, learning objectives of the group intervention include developing caregivers' emotional tolerance and teaching caregivers to take control, appreciate the social and emotional difficulties in helping another person, and establishing realistic goals. In collaboration with social workers in the community, social work faculty from Adelphi University will lead, organize and deliver the educational and psychotherapeutic component. This partnership will allow for the exchange of knowledge and skills, as well as the development of an intervention program that can be implemented at various community-based agencies.

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Submitted by Philip A. Rozario, Ph. D. & Bradley D. Zodikoff, Ph.D.  
Adelphi University

Tel: (301) 443-9462 ♦ Fax: (301) 443-2902 ♦ [www.whcoa.gov](http://www.whcoa.gov)